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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 9 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia dated 5 August 2011 concerning the third anniversary of the August war (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as an official document of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Lomaia**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 9 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia regarding the third anniversary of the August war

7 August 2011 marks the third anniversary of Russia's open and full-scale military aggression against Georgia. Unfortunately, three years after the August war, Russia still continues its aggression policy directed towards the destruction of the statehood, sovereignty and independence of Georgia, as well as against Georgian nationals.

Since the break-up of the Soviet Union and the restoration of Georgia's independence, the Russian Federation has been engaged in a consistent and deliberate fight against the independent State of Georgia. The Russian Federation employs many methods in this fight and does not even refrain from the flagrant violation of the fundamental norms of international law. During the last 20 years, the Russian Federation has conducted several waves of ethnic cleansing in Georgia's integral regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali. As a result, hundreds of thousands of citizens were forced to leave their places of residence. Since 2000 Russia has actively used its economic and energy levers against Georgia. The embargo Russia imposed on Georgian products is still in place. In August 2008, the Russian Federation carried out large-scale military aggression against Georgia, occupied 20 per cent of its territory and recognized as "independent States" the occupation regimes created by Russia itself. The Russian Federation has now proceeded to new methods in its fight against Georgia — from 2010 onwards, Russia has masterminded over 12 terrorist acts in the territory of Georgia, most of which, fortunately, were thwarted by the Georgian law enforcement agencies.

By taking such actions, the Russian Federation demonstratively breaches the main norms and principles of international law and its bilateral and multilateral obligations, including all resolutions on Georgia adopted by the Security Council and all provisions of the six-point ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008. It is significant to note that the Russian Federation "got rid" of any international presence in the Tskhinvali region and Abkhazia, thus making these regions into so-called "black holes" of organized crime, trafficking and violation of human rights. Hence, the international community is today deprived of any access to objective information from the occupied territories.

On the third anniversary of the war, the Russian Federation is still proceeding with its attempts to "buy" so-called "independence" of the Tskhinvali region and Abkhazia by holding trainings of occupation troops in the occupied territories, carrying out visits of high-ranking Russian officials, conducting rapid militarization of the regions and construction of military bases there. Of particular concern is the deployment of rocket launchers and artillery mounts in the occupied territories.

Russia's aggressive policy against Georgia has recently taken on a new dimension, manifesting itself in organizing and funding terrorist acts in the remaining non-occupied territory of Georgia by representatives of the Russian occupation forces, in particular, by officials of the Ministry of Defence Main

Intelligence Directorate and the Federal Security Service. This has resulted in casualties among the peaceful population.

The foregoing lays bare Russia's aggressive plans regarding Georgia and poses a threat to the peace and stability of the entire Caucasus and Black Sea regions. It is obvious that the Russian Federation does not seem to reject the idea of a new full-scale military aggression against Georgia.

It is a regrettable fact that the Russian Federation's aggressive policy makes it impossible for hundreds of thousands of people internally displaced as a result of ethnic cleansing to return to their places of origin. Russia adopts a clearly discriminatory approach to people of Georgian origin. Moreover, even ethnic Georgians holding Russian citizenship are denied their rights, including property rights, in the occupied territories. The policy of ethnic cleansing is still continuing, this time by changing the names of historical and geographical sites in the occupied areas, destroying Georgian architectural monuments or reshaping them in the Russian style.

Despite such actions of Russia, the Georgian Government has elected to pursue a peaceful policy oriented towards development, dialogue and engagement. Georgia fully complies with all obligations under the ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008 and adheres to the memorandums of understanding signed by the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Internal Affairs with the European Union Monitoring Mission. In his address to the European Parliament on 23 November 2010, the President of Georgia made a unilateral declaration not to use force in order to restore control over our illegally divided country, neither against the occupation forces, nor against their proxies.

Georgia spares no diplomatic effort to achieve the restoration of the presence of international organizations in the occupied territories and to provide objective information to international organizations concerning the current security and human rights situation. Georgia continues constructive engagement in the Geneva talks and remains committed to holding an unconditional dialogue with the Russian Federation at any stage for the peaceful resolution of the existing problems.

In parallel, the Government of Georgia is motivated to create favourable conditions for the residents of the Tskhinvali region and Abkhazia to live in a stable, peaceful and developed Georgia. For this purpose, the Georgian Government worked out a strategy and a plan of action for these regions, which are oriented towards improving the economic and social conditions for our Abkhazian and Ossetian compatriots and ending the isolation of these regions.

The past three years have shown that Georgia's European and Euro-Atlantic integration is an irreversible process and the only right way to develop the country. Integration with the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization remains at the top of the list of Georgia's foreign political priorities, the fulfilment of which will ensure against the recurrence of any aggression similar to that of August 2008.

Three years after the 2008 war, Georgia still remains in a vulnerable international environment. Fundamental threats continue to emanate from the Russian Federation. In spite of this, Georgia is convinced that the correct strategy it has chosen to pursue and a security policy focused on peace, dialogue and engagement will yield results and the threats proceeding from Russia will never

materialize. A tribute for this, quite naturally, goes to the international community's support and the civilized world's firm position on Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the inadmissibility of Russia's occupation of the territories of Georgia.

Tbilisi, 5 August 2011